

FC|XC HKA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
305 Main Road, Herkimer, New York, 13350 • 315-866-3272
Archpriest John Udics, Rector • e-mail: john.udics@gmail.com
Deacon Demetrios Richards • e-mail: dwr00nhr@twcny.rr.com
Parish Web Page: www.cnyorthodoxchurch.org

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

This week's Bulletin in memory of the Prawlocki, Gromadzky,
Stehnach and Jovorosky Families is given by Sonia Buttino.

And for the health of the Prawlocki, Buttino, Nuzum Families given by Sonia Buttino

December 28, 2014	Sunday	after the Nativity of Our Lord, The Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James, the Brother of the Lord	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
January 1, 2015	Thursday	Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord, Saint Basil the Great, New Year's Day	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
January 3	Saturday		Great Vespers	4:00 pm
January 4	Sunday		Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

Saints of the Day: Saint Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (397). Venerable Nilus, Monk, of Stolben Island (1554). Venerable Anthony, Abbot of Siya Monastery (Novgorod) (1556). New Hieromartyr Sergius (1917). New Hieromartyr Priest Antonius, Hieromartyr Andronic (1918). Saint Ambrosius Confessor, Bishop of Kamenets-Podolsk (1932). New Hieromartyrs Priests Sergius, Michael and Sergius, Deacon Nicephore and Hieromartyr Galaction, Martyr John (1937). New Hieromartyrs Priests Peter and Basil (1941). Venerable John, Faster of Saint Sabbas' Monastery. Martyr Athenodorus of Mesopotamia (304). Venerable Paul the Obedient. Venerable Gregory the Silent of Serbia, founder of Grigoriou Monastery, Mount Athos (1405). Venerable John, Faster of the Kiev Caves (12 c.). Venerable Monk Ignatius, near Blachernae. Saint Bassa of Jerusalem, Abess (5 c.). Saint Philothea of Turnovo (1060), whose relics are in Arges, Romania. Saint Diuma, Bishop of the Mercians and Middle Anglians. Martyr Neophytus. Martyr Dometius. Martyrs Isidore, Acepimas and Leo.

Please remember in your prayers: Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. Bishop BOULOS Yazigi, Bishop YOHANNA Ibrahim, of Aleppo. Archimandrites Athanasy, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Alvian, Eugene, Leonid, John, Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Jacobus, Leonid, Vasil, Vasil. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Father Victor, Mothers Raphaela, Michaela, Catherine, Anna. Matushka Laura, Dimitri, Nina, Daniel, Catherine, Helen, Anna, Peter, Helen, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Jamie, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren, Vincent, Diane, Abigail.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Matushka Laura and Father Leonid and their newborn baby daughter Schmidt were offered at Liturgy and Moleben today at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of grandfather John Udics, Priest Sergius Willis and Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemann were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Mary Panarites, Julie and Joseph Firlet, Walter Jovorosky, Jr, Anne, and Walter Jovorosky, Sr, John and Vera Prawlocki, Frank Prawlocki, Anna and Wasil Prawlocki and Paul and Kay Sokol were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

Archpastoral Letter for the Feast of the Nativity 2014

Dearly Beloved of Our Diocesan Family: **Christ is Born! – Let us glorify Him!**

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ... And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.” (John 1:14, 16)

The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, which we celebrate today, does not simply mark the birth in Bethlehem of a beautiful baby boy, who grows up to be a good and kind man, a great teacher and a holy religious leader. It actually proclaims to the world the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the coming in the flesh of the Son and Word of God to dwell among His people. The Divine Word becomes fully human without ceasing to be fully God; He assumes complete human nature, everything about our humanity, except sin. In One Person, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is both God and Man. Today the Church celebrates this central fact of our faith: the Son of God has appeared on earth as a real human, born of the Virgin Mary, in order to die and rise again to give life to the world.

When Saint John the Theologian writes that the Word dwelt among us, he is telling us that He has literally “tabernacled” or “pitched His tent” among us. This recalls the Exodus and Sinai experiences, the Old Testament Ark of the Covenant and Temple, and the visions of the prophets – all places of God’s special appearances, the famous ways in which He revealed Himself in the past. These revelations show us that it is possible to know God, because He truly does reveal Himself. And they show us, too, that when we pray to the Lord in times of need, He does not have to imagine what we are going through – times of trouble or being misunderstood, hunger or poverty, rejection or loneliness, suffering or facing death. He only has to remember, because He has experienced all this Himself – in the fullness of our humanity!

In telling us that “we beheld His glory,” the Gospel reminds us of both Christ’s majesty and His humility: His majesty shown by the signs and wonders He performed and by the Divine Light that radiated from Him on the mount of the Transfiguration ... and also His humble service to mankind, as God, shown most perfectly on the Cross, where He experiences death in the flesh to ransom us from the devil and sin and death. In both ways, He reveals Himself as the One sent from the Father. This divine glory was seen by Moses on Mount Sinai, and by Peter, James and John on Mount Tabor; but it has also been seen by Saints of every age. And many more people have beheld His glory in the countless miracles, both small and great, that He continually works for us the faithful and to help bring those outside into the Faith.

The new-born Savior Jesus is called “the only Begotten Son of God” to make it clear that He Himself is divine. He has the same nature as God the Father. When Saint John says that those who receive Him and believe in Him are given the power to become children of God (John 1:12), he means that by grace we can become like Jesus Christ. Our Orthodox Christian life, beginning with *God. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He (Christ) is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is*” (1 John 3:1-2).

Saint John of Kronstadt summarizes the meaning of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord when he writes: *“And the Word became flesh! ... in order to make us earthly beings into heavenly ones; in order to make sinners into saints; in order to raise us up from corruption into incorruption, from earth to heaven; from enslavement to sin and the devil into the glorious freedom of children of God; from death into immortality, in order to make us sons of God and to seat us together with Him upon the Throne as His royal children. O boundless compassion of God! O inexpressible wisdom of God! O great wonder, astounding not only the human mind, but the angelic (mind) as well!”*

On this most joyous Feast, let us unite together as a diocesan family, each in his own parish, and raise our voices in hymns of praise of the Incarnate One born of the Theotokos. Let us open our hearts to the gift of His love in His becoming one of us to die for our salvation; and let us renew our commitment to His way of life, begun at our baptism. Come, let us worship Him as our God! ... not just this day, but at every opportunity through the coming new year!

Please be assured of my prayers for each of you, for good health and the choicest of our Lord’s blessings, and my love for all the clergy and faithful of our God-protected Diocese.

With my prayers, my blessing and my love,

+ **MICHAEL** Bishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

REFLECTION by Saint Nikolai of Zhicha,

The merciful God often sends comfort to those pleasing to Him on earth from the other world through his saints. Saint Theodota suffered for Christ before Saint Anastasia. Anastasia was then cast into a confined and dark prison to die of hunger, according to the judgment of the torturers. During the thirty days of her imprisonment, Saint Theodota appeared to Anastasia every night from the other world and strengthened her in her suffering. Anastasia spoke of many things with Saint Theodota and asked numerous questions. One night she asked her how she was able to come to her after her death. Theodota replied that the souls of the martyrs are given special grace from God, so that after departing this world they may return to speak to whomever they desire for the imparting of instruction and comfort. When thirty days had passed, the torturer brought Saint Anastasia out of prison and was amazed to see her still alive. He then condemned her, along with several others, to be drowned in the sea. The Christians were put into a small boat by the soldiers, who set sail in another. When the Christians were brought out into the deep, the soldiers upset the boat, so that the water would enter and drown the condemned. Then a miraculous vision took place: Saint Theodota appeared on the water and guided the boat to shore. Thus, all who were condemned to death were saved with Anastasia. Seeing this miracle of God, one hundred and twenty pagans immediately believed in Christ and were baptized.

Do you have a pagan living in your home? This is how newborn babies were called in the recent past in Orthodox homes. Until the baby was baptized, he or she was referred to as a ‘pagan’ and its name was not mentioned. So we pray for the family, which includes the newborn, until after the baptism. **GOD GRANT MANY YEARS!**